

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): Apparatus for preparing beverages comprising:
an extraction module for delivering a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed tank of sufficient capacity for supplying the extraction module with several volumes of liquid for repeatedly supplying more than one beverage, and
pressurizing means suitable for supplying the extraction module with pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed chamber, having a capacity that is several times smaller than the capacity of the tank;

the chamber being arranged, in a filling configuration, to communicate with the tank in order to be filled with liquid and,

the chamber being arranged, in a ~~a~~an extraction module feeding configuration, to communicate with the pressurizing means in order to pressurize the liquid in the chamber and to inject pressurized liquid into the extraction module and thereby permit delivery of the liquid through the extraction module,

the pressurizing means comprises at least one autonomous reserve of pressurized gas, and in the extraction module feeding configuration,

the gas enters into direct contact with the liquid present in the chamber while the tank remains isolated from the pressure with respect to the chamber, so that the liquid present in the tank is not subjected to the gas pressure exerted in the chamber, and

wherein the apparatus further comprises valve means that are movable in at least two positions to act,

in a chamber filling position, to place the chamber in the filling configuration, and

in a position for feeding the extraction module by the chamber to permit the extraction of the portion in the extraction module, wherein the chamber is connected to a gas feed line of the autonomous reserve of pressurized gas.

Claim 2 (currently amended): Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~module is an~~ extraction module is suitable for receiving a portion of food substance for the preparation of a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid from the chamber through said substance.

Claims 3-5 (canceled):

Claim 6 (currently amended): Apparatus according to ~~Claim 1~~Claim 1, wherein the chamber is made of pressure-resistant and impact-resistant material.

Claim 7 (currently amended): Apparatus according to ~~Claim 1~~Claim 1, wherein the tank comprises thermally insulating walls.

Claim 8 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the insulating walls comprise at least one internal wall of material with a low specific heat and at least one insulation layer surrounding the internal wall.

Claim 9 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein the internal wall is made of a material selected from the group consisting of glass and metal.

Claim 10 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the chamber is located inside the tank.

Claim 11 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the chamber is mechanically isolated from an impact with respect to the inner surface of the insulating walls of the tank.

Claim 12 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the chamber is positioned outside the tank.

Claim 13 (currently amended): Apparatus according to ~~Claim 3~~Claim 1, wherein the valve means comprise a two-way valve that is manually or electrically actuated.

Claim 14 (currently amended): Apparatus according to ~~Claim 1~~Claim 1, wherein the gas supply pressure is between 2 and 25 bar.

Claim 15 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein the gas is selected from the group consisting of compressed air, CO₂, N₂, N₂O, O₂ argon and mixtures thereof.

Claim 16 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 2, comprising means for heating the liquid before it is introduced into the extraction module.

Claim 17 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the heating means are electrical means of the resistive type or a thermo block or means of the burner type using a fuel selected from the group consisting of solid, gaseous and liquid fuel.

Claim 18 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the built-in electric power supply means are provided to supply the electrical heating means and comprise at least one electric battery.

Claim 19 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the electrical connecting means are provided in order to supply the heating means periodically during connection of the electrical connecting means to an external electric power supply source.

Claim 20 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 19, wherein the electrical connecting means comprise an AC electrical connector and/or an electric power connector for the temporary connection to a mobile or fixed power supply of the cigarette lighter type or an electrical terminal or substation delivering low-voltage power.

Claim 21 (previously presented): Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the module is a pressurized-liquid delivery module.

Claim 22 (currently amended): Apparatus for preparing beverages comprising:
a module for delivering a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed tank of sufficient capacity for supplying the module with liquid for supplying more than one beverage,
pressurizing means suitable for supplying the module with pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed chamber, of which the capacity is several times smaller than the capacity of the tank;
the chamber being arranged, in a filling configuration, to communicate with the tank in order to be filled with liquid and,
the chamber being arranged, in a module feeding configuration, to communicate with the pressurizing means in order to pressurize the liquid in the chamber and to inject pressurized liquid into the module and thereby permit delivery of the liquid through the module,
the apparatus is configured to be mobile or portable for service by being free of an electrical connection to an electrical power supply outlet during service,
the pressurizing means is non-electrical and comprises at least one autonomous reserve of pressurized gas, and
the tank comprises heat insulated walls to reduce the liquid heat loss during transport, and wherein the tank further comprises a valve means to connect the chamber to an atmospheric pressure in a first position of the valve means and to connect the chamber to a pressurized gas in a second position of the valve means.

Claim 23 (currently amended): Method for delivering a pressurized liquid in a portable or mobile beverage distribution apparatus comprising: providing a valve means acting in at least two positions and a liquid feed chamber which is filled in a first position of the valve means by the effect of the difference of pressure between the chamber and a feed tank of the apparatus having a larger liquid capacity than that of the chamber and in a second position of the valve means which chamber is emptied after filling the chamber under the pressure of a gas supplied from an autonomous gas reserve of the apparatus; said gas entering in the chamber to pressurize the chamber while the chamber is tight to the feed tank so that the feed tank is free of the pressure of gas.

Claim 24 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim~~ Claim 23, wherein the liquid feed chamber is filled by the effect of the hydrostatic pressure between the chamber and the tank.

Claim 25 (canceled):

Claim 26 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim 25~~ Claim 23, wherein, before transport, the tank is filled with a liquid at a temperature above ambient temperature and the tank is heat insulated.

Claim 27 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim 25~~ Claim 23, wherein, before transport, the tank is heated with a liquid at a temperature above ambient temperature and the tank is heat insulated.

Claim 28 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim~~ Claim 26, wherein before transport, the liquid is filled or heated at a temperature of at least 90°C.

Claim 29 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim~~ Claim 26, wherein, the liquid in the tank is heated to compensate at least partially for the heat loss during service.

Claim 30 (currently amended): Method according to ~~claim~~ Claim 27, wherein the liquid is heated in the apparatus with a heater, which is electrically supplied by a battery or a burner.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A portable apparatus for preparing beverages comprising:
a module for delivering a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed tank,
a liquid feed chamber,

valve means that are movable in at least two positions;

the chamber being arranged, in a filling configuration in a first position of the valve means, to communicate with the tank in order to be filled with liquid and in a module feeding configuration in a second position of the valve means, to communicate with a ~~source~~ autonomous reserve of pressurized gas in order to pressurize the liquid in the chamber and to inject pressurized liquid into the module and thereby permit delivery of the liquid through the module, and in the module feeding configuration the gas enters into direct contact with the liquid present in the chamber while the tank remains isolated from the pressure with respect to the chamber.

Claim 32 (new): Apparatus for preparing beverages comprising:
a module for delivering a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed tank of sufficient capacity for supplying the module with several volumes of liquid for repeatedly supplying more than one beverage, and
pressurizing means suitable for supplying the module with pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed chamber, having a capacity that is several times smaller than the capacity of the tank;

the chamber being arranged, in a filling configuration, to communicate with the tank in order to be filled with liquid and,

the chamber being arranged, in a module feeding configuration, to communicate with the pressurizing means in order to pressurize the liquid in the chamber and to inject pressurized liquid into the module and thereby permit delivery of the liquid through the module,

the pressurizing means comprises at least one autonomous reserve of pressurized gas, and in the module feeding configuration,

the gas enters into direct contact with the liquid present in the chamber while the tank remains isolated from the pressure with respect to the chamber, so that the liquid present in the tank is not subjected to the gas pressure exerted in the chamber,

wherein the module is an extraction module suitable for receiving a portion of food substance for the preparation of a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid from the chamber through said substance, and

wherein the apparatus further comprises valve means that are movable in at least two positions to act,

in a chamber filling position, to place the chamber in the filling configuration, and

in a position for feeding the module by the chamber to permit the extraction of the portion in the extraction module.

Claim 33 (new): Apparatus according to Claim 32, wherein the chamber is positioned under half of the tank so as to be supplied with liquid under the effect of the hydrostatic pressure of the tank when the valve means are actuated to restore the chamber to a pressure substantially equivalent to atmospheric pressure.

Claim 34 (new): Apparatus for preparing beverages comprising:
a module for delivering a beverage by supplying a pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed tank of sufficient capacity for supplying the module with several volumes of liquid for repeatedly supplying more than one beverage, and
pressurizing means suitable for supplying the module with pressurized liquid,
a liquid feed chamber, having a capacity that is several times smaller than the capacity of the tank;

the chamber being arranged, in a filling configuration, to communicate with the tank in order to be filled with liquid and,

the chamber being arranged, in a module feeding configuration, to communicate with the pressurizing means in order to pressurize the liquid in the chamber and to inject pressurized liquid into the module and thereby permit delivery of the liquid through the module,

the pressurizing means comprises at least one autonomous reserve of pressurized gas, and
in the module feeding configuration,

the gas enters into direct contact with the liquid present in the chamber while the tank remains isolated from the pressure with respect to the chamber, so that the liquid present in the tank is not subjected to the gas pressure exerted in the chamber, and

wherein the chamber is connected to the tank by a liquid inlet actuated by a one-way valve; said valve is opened during filling by the hydrostatic effect of a thrust of the liquid from the tank to the chamber, and is kept closed by a thrust of the liquid present in the feed chamber under the pressure exerted by the gas.